

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 SS-15 NSC-05

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0282

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 3193

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: OVIP, SHUM, PINS, ELAB, AR (GROSSMAN, AMERICO)

SUBJECT: AMERICO GROSSMAN'S RETURN TRIP TO US

REF: BUENOS AIRES 2065 AND SUBSEQUENT

1. PERONIST POLITICIAN GROSSMAN DEPARTS THIS EVENING (APR 29) ON RETURN FLIGHT TO WASHINGTON ACCOMPANIED BY ADMIRAL MENDIA. HE BELIEVES HE MAY HAVE ACHIEVED SOME IMPORTANT GAINS DURING HIS SHORT INTERLUDE HERE IN TERMS OF RAISING THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF GOVERNMENT AND ARMED FORCES OFFICIALS AS TO THE IMPERATIVE OF MODERATING GOA ANTI-INSURGENCY TACTICS. GROSSMAN CLAIMS TO HAVE ARGUED FORCEFULLY WITH ADMIRAL MASSERA'S AIDES, FONMIN GUZZETTI AND PRESIDENTIAL AIDE JOFRE, THAT, UNLESS VIDELA EXERCISED GREATER LEADERSHIP AND CONTROL OVER THE GOVERNMENTAL PROCESS AND THE ANTI-INSURGENCY CAMPAIGN, THERE WOULD BE VERY SERIOUS PROBLEMS AHEAD IN TERMS NOT ONLY OF US-ARGENTINE RELATIONS BUT ALSO OF GROWING POPULAR DISCONTENT AT HOME. GROSSMAN SAID HE WAS "BLACKMAILING" GOA OFFICIALS BY PURPOSEFULLY EXAGGERATING (A) SIGNIFICANCE OF ROME PRESS CONFERENCE LAST WEEK OF MONTONEROS AND AUTHENTIC PERONIST PARTY; AND (B) CRITICISM EXPECTED TO BE LEVELED AGAINST ARGENTINA AT ILO CONFERENCE IN JUNE BY AFL-CIO AND ICFTU.

2. HIS MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT, GROSSMAN SAID, WAS IN GETTING
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HIS FRIEND JUSTICE MINISTER GOMEZ TO DECREE THE RELEASE OF 4 OR 5 POLITICAL PRISONERS, INCLUDING EX-SENATOR SOLARI IRIGOYEN. (ACCORDING TO GROSSMAN, VIDELA HAS SIGNED SOLARI'S RELEASE, ALTHOUGH IT HAS NOT YET BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SOLARI HAS NOT YET BEEN RELEASED.) GROSSMAN STATED HE PLAYED A MAJOR ROLE IN THIS DEVELOPMENT BY PERSUADING GOMEZ THAT THIS ACTION WAS NECESSARY TO IMPROVE ARGENTINA'S

IMAGE ABROAD. HE ALSO CREDITED AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL FOR HIS EFFORTS ON SOLARI'S BEHALF. GROSSMAN SAID HE WOULD ALSO ATTEMPT TO MAKE A CASE FOR DORA GOLDFARB'S RELEASE.

3. WITH REGARD TO THE TRADE UNION PROBLEMS, GROSSMAN SAID HE HAD PASSED THE MESSAGE HERE THAT ICFTU'S OTTO KERSTEN WAS FURIOUS AT HAVING BEEN DUPED BY PRESIDENT VIDELA'S "PROMISE" LAST FEBRUARY THAT TRADE UNION ACTIVITIES WOULD BE NORMALIZED WITHIN FIVE MONTHS AND THAT OTHER LIBERALIZING STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN AS WELL. GROSSMAN'S INFORMATION EVIDENTLY WAS BASED ON A CONVERSATION HE HAD IN WASHINGTON WITH AFL-CIO'S ANDY MCLELLAN.

4. FOR ARA LABOR ADVISOR O'GRADY: PLEASE NOTIFY MCLELLAN THAT GASTRONOMIC WORKER LEADER RAMON ELORZA PLANS TO TRAVEL MONDAY FOR TALKS IN WASHINGTON WITH AFL-CIO. GROSSMAN STATES THAT HE PERSUADED ELORZA TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE TALKS. GROSSMAN HOPES TO CONVINCE GOA TO RESCIND INTERPOL ARREST ORDER AGAINST EXCGT HEAD CASILDO HERRERAS IN EXCHANGE FOR AFL-CIO AGREEMENT TO CONTINUE "TAKING IT EASY" ON ARGENTINA AT ILO CONFERENCE. WHEN WE ASKED GROSSMAN WHETHER HE THOUGHT A GOA RETREAT ON HERRERAS WOULD BE SUFFICIENT TO AVOID A CLASH WITH AFL-CIO AND ICFTU, GROSSMAN ADDED AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT THAT OF COURSE SOME NOMINAL PROGRESS ON THE TRADE UNION LAW WOULD ALSO BE NECESSARY.

5. COMMENT: UNDOUBTEDLY THERE IS SOME ELEMENT OF EXAGGERATION IN GROSSMAN'S ACCOUNT OF HIS ROLE IN THE RELEASE OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS AND IN SOME OF THE OTHER DEVELOPMENTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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BUT WE BELIEVE HE IS MAKING A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION. EX-PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR (UCRP), LUIS CAEIRO, WITH WHOM WE HAVE ALSO BEEN IN CONTACT ON THE SOLARI CASE, HAS BEEN UNABLE TO CONFIRM THAT VIDELA HAS SIGNED THE EX-SENATOR'S RELEASE. SOLARI'S HOPE IS TO TRAVEL TO VENEZUELA IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS RELEASE AND FROM THERE TO VISIT THE US.

6. GROSSMAN WILL CONTACT ARA/ECA'S RONDON ON ARRIVAL IN WASHINGTON.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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